

Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting: Exceptional Narrative

Section 475 (4) (A) of the Social Security Act lists the scope of foster parent costs that are reimbursable under title IV-E (and are therefore allowable in the foster care rate):

- Food;
- Clothing;
- Shelter;
- Daily supervision;
- School supplies; and
- Personal incidentals.

Many of these costs are covered by the Basic Maintenance portion of the foster care rate (See *Understanding the Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting Brochure DCF-P-PFS0142*). Additional costs related to the identified needs of the child are covered by the Supplemental Portion of the foster care rate. Finally, costs above what are already considered in the Basic and Supplemental portions of the foster care rate that fall within one of five categories as listed in DCF Ch. 56.23 Admin. Rule may be included.

Additional federal guidance has clarified specific expenses that are and are not allowable, which are shown in the chart on the following page.

The use of the “other” check box should be limited and used only when allowable costs do not fit into separate cost type categories. If “other” is the only available option, limit number of characters in justification field to less than 250 characters.

Title IV-E Unallowable and Allowable Expenses under Exceptional Rate Justification		
Cost Type- Least Restrictive	Unallowable Justification under "other" narrative	Allowable under Title IV-E
		All examples below do not require the use of "other" or narrative unless noted below.
Checkbox: Foster Parent Supervision, Time, and Training	Title IV-B and/or locally funded expenses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respite care • Service-oriented childcare such as therapeutic care • Other childcare that is anticipated as a part of "ordinary parental duties." 	Examples Behavioral Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily supervision during a foster parent's working hours when the child is not in school. • Other supervision that allows the foster parent to attend activities which are beyond the scope of "ordinary parental duties", including attending foster parent training, case planning meetings, or judicial hearings. • Additional foster parent time required to meet the child's supervision needs, including time away from work, increased level of care, supervision and/or training. Examples under Emotional Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parent time supervising visits with parents and/or siblings. • Transportation time to/from visits with siblings, other relatives, or other caretakers. Examples under for Physical Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child has medical needs that require additional time or training of the foster parent. Appropriate narrative under "other" check box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID costs • After Hours/Emergency Placements
Checkbox: Personal Incidentals- Care Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal clothing- boots, snow pants, etc. These costs are covered under the basic rate amount for clothing. • Glasses (covered under Medicaid) • Replacement glasses (Must use funding source outside of rate setting). 	Personal incidentals for care needs utilize check box and identify cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-the-counter medications and special dietary foods • Hygiene and cosmetics • Extra infant and toddler supplies, including highchairs and diapers • *Note: reimbursement of "personal incidentals: care needs" is only applicable to those expenses that go beyond what is normally expected. Basic care needs are reimbursed in the basic maintenance rate. Appropriate narrative under "other" check box Additional loads of laundry

<p>Checkbox: Personal Incidentals- Normalcy Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Insurance costs to add foster child to policy as a driver. 	<p>Personal incidentals for normalcy activities utilize check box and identify cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver's education • College prep costs: ACT/SAT tests, application fees, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities in the UW System will waive college application fees. High school counselors will need to make this request through the university. • WI high schools require all students to take the ACT as part of their junior year curriculum and will pay for the fees associated with the first ACT exam. • Work-related costs (uniforms, etc.) • Reasonable and occasional costs of such items as tickets or other admission fees for sporting, entertainment or cultural events, or dues for clubs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use this box for club fees, YCMA, dance classes, golf lessons, babysitting course, football uniform, boxing classes, horseback riding, swimming lessons, etc that your agency is willing to reimburse for.</i> <p>* Appropriate narrative under "other" check box</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of additional cell phone for child • Cost of cell phone plan for child
<p>Checkbox: Transportation</p>	<p>Transportation to/from doctor's appointments, therapy, other unallowable costs.</p>	<p><i>Transportation to allow the child and foster parent to participate in (state allowable cost listed below) – X miles at \$Y per mile:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court hearings • Family interactions • Independent living skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work or work-related training • College visits • Meetings with caseworker/child welfare agency • Extra-curricular activities • Transportation to/from visits with siblings, other relatives, or other caretakers. <p>(These costs may only be reimbursed if the foster parent(s) is providing the transportation beyond what is normally expected.)</p>

Checkbox: WI Shares	Should not be documented under "other"	Enter in the total cost of childcare not covered by WI shares.
Checkbox: Sibling Placement	Should not be documented under "other"	Select Sibling Placement check box. Suggested amount is \$100 for each sibling.
Checkbox: Minor Parent/Minor Child	Should not be documented under "other"	Select minor parent/minor child box. Suggested to follow basic costs based on age of the child not in formal placement.
Checkbox: Replacement of Basic Wardrobe	Should not be documented under "other"	Enter the amount of costs to replace the basic wardrobe that has been lost or destroyed in a manner other than normal wear and tear.
Checkbox: Transportation – School of Origin	Should not be documented under "other" "School transportation"	Transportation to and from the child's school of origin – enter the total dollar amount of X miles at \$Y per mile. (not allowable for Adoption Assistance)
Checkbox: Equalization	Should not be documented under "other"	Equalization – "Sammy" was in care on 2/21/2011 and has been continuously living with the same provider since then. (not allowable for Adoption Assistance)

As shown in the previous chart, title IV-E explicitly prohibits reimbursement for service costs and associated travel but does allow for reimbursement related to the foster parent's time to meet the child's needs. While there may appear to be overlap between support and services for a child, you can accommodate the requirements by describing the **condition of the child** and the **increased level of care and supervision** that is required of the foster parents to meet the child's needs in the exceptional rate narrative. Below are examples of unallowable narratives and preferred alternatives:

Cost Type	Improper Justifications	Preferred alternative
Not Allowable	Child needs to attend medical appointments, therapy, AODA counseling, etc.	<i>Shall not be included</i> Time transporting a child and time attending appointments is allowable. Check the child has physical, emotional, or behavioral needs box under <i>time</i> .
	"Treatment Foster Care"	<i>Shall not be included</i>
	"Respite care" "Therapeutic childcare"	<i>Shall not be included</i>
	"Medical expenses not covered by Medicaid" "Medical Expenses" "Glasses"	<i>Shall not be included</i>
	"See File" "See Attached" "See Invoice"	Proper justification must be documented to reflect the specific needs of the child. Summarize child's needs and additional foster parent expenses using allowable costs and preferred alternative language.
Medical expenses Not Allowable	Title XIX (Medicaid) and/or locally funded expenses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine medical expenses • Doctor's appointments • Therapy or counseling • Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse treatment • Medical Equipment 	None
Foster parent expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily transportation (should be incorporated into the cost of other items). • Transportation to/from doctors' appointments, therapy, and other expenses that are unallowable under title IV-E. 	<p>See Least Restrictive- Foster Parent Supervision, Time, and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional foster parent time required to meet the child's supervision needs, including time away from work, increased level of care, supervision and/or training. • Transportation to/from visits with siblings, other relatives, or other caretakers.